

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6733
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 21938

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PDIOP, CSCE, UR, US
SUBJECT: EMBASSY PROTESTS MCCLELLAN INCIDENT

REF: (A) STATE 231283, (B) STATE 230323, (C) MOSCOW 21609

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR CALLED ON MFA/USA DIVISION DEPUTY
CHIEF ISAKOV AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 12
TO PRESENT A NOTE PROTESTING MILITIA ACTIONS OF
SEPTEMBER 8 INVOLVING DENIAL OF ACCESS OF IRINA
MCCLELLAN TO VICE CONSUL PRINGLE'S RESIDENCE
AND SUBSEQUENT HEAVY SURVEILLANCE. EMBASSY NOTE (COPY
BEING POUCHED TO EUR/SOV) EXPRESSED STRONG PROTEST
AGAINST DENIAL OF ACCESS, REJECTED CONTENTION THAT A
U.S. DIPLOMAT DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO INVITE A
SOVIET CITIZEN TO HIS OR HER HOUSE, AND PROTESTED THE
BUMPING OF PRINGLE'S CAR.

2. POL COUNSELOR EMPHASIZED SERIOUSNESS OF INCIDENT,
WHICH INCIDENTALLY INVOLVED THE WIFE OF A U.S. CITIZEN.
HE NOTED THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME ANYONE HAD SAID
EMBASSY PERSONNEL DID NOT HAVE A RIGHT TO INVITE
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SOVIET CITIZENS TO EMBASSY APARTMENTS AND HOPED THAT
IT DID NOT REPRESENT AN OFFICIAL VIEW. FURTHERMORE,
THE BUMPING OF PRINGLE'S CAR COULD HAVE CAUSED SOMEONE
TO BE INJURED. HE EXPRESSED EMBASSY EXPECTATION THAT
THIS SORT OF BEHAVIOR WOULD NOT RECUR.

3. ISAKOV SAID THAT HE KNEW WHO MRS. MCCLELLAN WAS BUT

WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE EVENTS OUTLINED IN THE EMBASSY'S NOTE, AND THAT HE THEREFORE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE PROTEST. HE OBSERVED THAT SOMETIMES OUR RESPECTIVE VERSIONS OF EVENTS DO NOT COINCIDE AND SUGGESTED THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM. HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ASSUMPTION EXPRESSED IN THE NOTE THAT THE PASSENGERS IN THE FOLLOW-ON CAR WERE SOVIET OFFICERS. IT WAS, THUS, HARD TO PASS JUDGMENT ON THE CONTENTS OF THE NOTE, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF MRS. MCCLELLAN'S PREVIOUS BEHAVIOR, WHICH HAS INCLUDED DEMONSTRATIVE ACTIONS VERGING ON PROVOCATIONS.

4. POL COUNSELOR REPLIED THAT, WHILE THE SOVIET OFFICERS HAD REFUSED TO SHOW PRINGLE THEIR DOCUMENTS, THEY HAD GIVEN THEIR NAMES; IN ADDITION, THE LICENSE NUMBER OF THE CAR AS GIVEN IN THE NOTE, COULD EASILY BE VERIFIED. AS FOR ISAKOV'S REMARKS ABOUT MRS. MCCLELLAN, THE EMBASSY COULD NOT CONSIDER A VISIT TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER'S APARTMENT TO SEE A MOVIE TO BE PROVOCATIVE IN ANY SENSE. IN ANY CASE, IF THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD PERMIT MRS. MCCLELLAN TO JOIN HER HUSBAND THIS PROBLEM WOULD DISAPPEAR.

5. ISAKOV REJOINED THAT MCCLELLAN IS A SOVIET CITIZEN AND THAT THE SOVIET POSITION ON HER CASE HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO THE U.S. SIDE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS "AT A CONFIDENTIAL

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VERY HIGH LEVEL." THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT THE CASE IS BEYOND THE MFA'S JURISDICTION AND THE MINISTRY CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT IT.

6. EMBOFF NOTED THAT THE USG CONTINUED TO HOPE FOR A REVERSAL OF THE SOVIET POSITION IN THE MCCLELLAN CASE. AS FOR THE INCIDENT AT HAND, HE REITERATED THE REQUEST THAT THE MFA LOOK INTO THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 8 AND TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT RECURRENCE. ISAKOV SAID THAT HE WOULD "TAKE NOTE OF" EMBASSY DEMARCHE. GARRISON

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